MAKING WORK-BASED LEARNING WORK FOR DISCONNECTED YOUTH

DESCRIPTION OF COUNTRY INITIATIVES FROM GERMANOPHONE COUNTRIES

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Training bonus scheme (Ausbildungsbonus) in Germany

In light of an increasing number of unsuccessful apprenticeship applicants, the federal government introduced the so-called training bonus (*Ausbildungsbonus*) to encourage the creation of 100 000 additional training positions for youths in need of support in the years 2008 to 2010. Youths were considered in need of support if they had unsuccessfully applied for an apprenticeship in the previous year or earlier[1], had no or only a lower secondary school leaving certificate or had learning difficulties or a disability (Bonin et al., 2013). Training companies received between EUR 4 000 and 6 000 per additional apprentice, of which 50% was paid after a four-month probation period and the remaining 50% after enrolling for the final apprenticeship exam (Wenzelmann, 2016).

A 2013 evaluation of the training bonus (Bonin et al., 2013) found that the scheme failed to encourage the provision of additional apprenticeship positions and was thus an inefficient use of public spending. Cost recovery would have occurred only if the training bonus scheme had resulted in the creation of additional training places and had shown a positive effect on completion and transition rates into employment. During the three-year scheme less than 48 000 apprenticeship positions received subsidies under the training bonus scheme, failing to meet the intended objective of 100 000.

Moreover, only 7.4% of all 48 000 subsidised positions could be considered truly additional, that is to say, they would not have been offered without the training bonus. Most training companies first hired an apprentice and only afterwards tried to receive financial support through the training bonus scheme. As they would have hired these apprentices in any event, the scheme provided the employers with windfall gains, did not lead to the creation of many truly additional apprenticeship places, and caused deadweight losses to the state.

The presence of strong deadweight losses for the state became visible in a company survey; in which 71% of all 996 subsidised companies stated that they would have created an additional training position and 82% would have recruited an unplaced applicant even without the training bonus (Bonin et al., 2013, p. 68). These high numbers are the lower bound of the companies' windfall gains because it is likely that not all surveyed companies admitted that they only applied for the training bonus because of financial incentives. To corroborate this descriptive calculation of the state's deadweight losses, an econometric analysis using the difference-in-difference procedure and regressions was undertaken. It first calculated the difference in apprenticeship positions before and after the introduction of the training bonus and the difference between subsidised and non-subsidised companies (the control group) to then calculate the difference between the differences between the group of subsidised companies and the control group (Bonin et al., 2013, p. 70). The regression analysis showed that a subsidised company only offered on average 0.087 additional training positions. Considering additionally, that the subsidised companies trained on average 1.169 apprentices, only 7.4% (0.087/1.169) of all 48 000 subsidised training positions were really created thanks to the training bonus. More than 90% of the training positions would have been created even without the training bonus; the windfall gains for the training companies were thus considerable. The econometric analysis shows that the deadweight losses for the state are even bigger than suggested by the initial descriptive results of the company survey (Bonin et al., 2013).

The 2013 evaluation also found no impact on apprenticeship completion rates under the scheme, observing no marked differences compared to non-subsidised apprenticeships in terms of dropout rates, success in the final apprenticeship exam and apprentices' labour market outcomes. Most often, training companies first selected candidates for their apprenticeship positions, then searched for financial support

[1] Someone is considered an unsuccessful applicant when she is either registered with the Public Labour Agency or a Job Centre as in search of an apprenticeship or has had at least five applications per calendar year declined (Bonin et al., 2013, p. 2).

schemes and only subsequently, were directed by chambers or public employment services towards the training bonus scheme (Bonin et al., 2013, p. 17). Since most of the subsidised companies had thus selected their apprentices considering their capacity to complete an apprenticeship rather than whether these youths would qualify for the training bonus subsidy, the likelihood of successful completion was similar for apprentices covered or those not covered by the scheme (Bonin et al., 2013, p. 140). In principle, at the workplace no difference was made between apprentices under the training bonus and all the others (Bonin et al., 2013, p. 25).

The recruitment criteria listed by surveyed companies did not differ much from those criteria more generally used. Independent from subsidies, employers considered motivation, interest, determination, personality and efficacy during the trial traineeship (that usually preceded the apprenticeship) most decisive in their recruitment decision, school grades were regarded less important (Bonin et al., 2013, p. 25).

The students under the training bonus differed markedly from other apprentices in terms of share of women (fewer), average age (more younger than 18 and more older than 24), migration background (significantly higher), disability (fewer) and educational attainment (more with only lower secondary attainment, which can also be explained by the fact that those with upper-secondary attainment were not covered by the scheme except for those from insolvent training companies) (Bonin et al., 2013, pp. 63-64).

Of the surveyed apprentices trained under the training bonus scheme, a third had found the placement through a trial traineeship, another third through own research, and the remaining 40% in order of importance through public employment services, chambers, personal recommendations and temporary work (Bonin et al., 2013, p. 26).

One of the reasons for the companies' windfall gains was the legal definition of "creation of additional training places". According to the criteria of additionality (SGB §421 para.4), a training position is considered additional when the number of training contracts is higher in the current year than the average number of training contracts during the three preceding years. However, the training bonus was not always the reason for additional training positions. For instance when a firm was expanding and/or training for the first time, additional apprentice placements were created. But even though these training positions would have been created without the bonus, both such expanding firms companies and those training for the first time became eligible to subsidies under the training bonus scheme.

Other reasons for the failure of the training bonus scheme to create new apprenticeship positions include the fact that in many regions similar subsidy schemes were already in place which limited take-up. When the federal training bonus was introduced, many programmes by the federal states were adjusted, stopped or put on ice, or refocused away from the creation of additional placement to more support for disadvantaged students (Bonin et al., 2013, p. 40). Given population decline, especially in Germany's Eastern regions, incentives to extent the apprenticeship offer were not needed and eventually led to the termination of the training bonus scheme. Many replacement measures at federal state level showed a trend away from financial support schemes to support measures before and during the apprenticeship (Bonin et al., 2013, p. 44). This is in line with other company surveys, in which most surveyed employers wish to see improvements in applicants' basic skills and more support for weaker apprentices during the training (Wenzelmann, 2016).

Source: Bonin, H., et al., (2013), *Begleitforschung 'Auswirkungen des Ausbildungsbonus auf den Ausbildungsmarkt und die öffentliche Haushalte'*, Forschungsbericht 438, ZEW (Zentrum für Europäische Wirtschaftsforschung), http://doku.iab.de/externe/2014/k140221r05.pdf (accessed 12 May 2016); Wenzelmann, F. (2016), "Lessons from subsidies in Germany: The Ausbildungsbonus", Work-based learning in Vocational Education and Training Conference, 29 April 2016, Bern, http://www.sbfi.admin.ch/aktuell/00399/02844/index.html?lang=en (accessed 13 May 2016).

Entry traineeships (Einstiegsqualifizierung, EQ) in Germany

Entry traineeships (*Einstiegsqualifizierung*, EQ, and EQ Plus) offer school leavers aged 16 to 25 who do not find a regular apprenticeship position a publicly supported opportunity to transition into the dual system. EQ was initially created by industry stakeholders in the framework of the National Training Pact, obtained a legal basis as a vocational preparation measure (*Berufsvorbereitende Massnahmen*, BvB) in 2007 and is funded by the Federal Employment Agency (Ausbildungs.info, 2016; European Commission, 2013).

The target group

The target group of EQ are young people aged between 16 and 25 who have completed obligatory schooling, though a lower secondary school leaving certificate is not required, who are registered with their local job centre as seeking employment, and who already know which occupation they are interested in (Ausbildung.info, 2016). In addition, since 2010, EQ Plus addresses the needs of young people with learning difficulties (BMBF, n.d).

The structure of the EQ programme

The training lasts between 6 to 12 months and is based on a contract between the young person and a training company. Trainees either directly apply at a training company or are matched with one by the Federal Employment Agency. Training companies pay EQ trainees a monthly traineeship remuneration of around EUR 216 (regulated by collective agreement where applicable) and also cover their monthly social security insurance of EUR 107. For both expenses they are later reimbursed from the Federal Employment Agency (BA, 2015; IHK Berlin, 2016).

Although only students under 18 years of age are obliged to attend vocational school, older students are also encouraged to do so (BA, 2015). The company-based training resembles the curricula taught during the first apprenticeship year (BMAS, 2012). Under EQ Plus, the EQ scheme is supplemented by additional support measures, which are provided by local job centres (DIHK, 2011). Measures include social and educational support, additional school-based tutoring, mentoring schemes supported by voluntary mentors and company-based tutoring or comparable support measures by the chambers or private foundations (BMBF, n.d.). The Federal Employment Service also encourages young refugees to enrol in the EQ Plus programme. For instance in 2016, BMW started to offer EQ for refugees from Syria and Afghanistan with additional occupation-specific language learning support (BMW, 2016).

Upon completion, students obtain a certificate from the training company and on demand a separate certificate from the relevant chamber that will help them in future job applications. If they later opt for an apprenticeship in the same occupation, the training duration can be shortened by six months (BA, 2014; Freie Berufe, 2012).

Evaluation of the EQ provision

According to a 2008 evaluation of the first three years of the EQ provision (Becker, Grebe and Asmus, 2008), two thirds of the EQ participants belonged to the target group of youths struggling to find an apprenticeship position. Upon EQ completion, two thirds of these youths continued into a regular apprenticeship. The evaluation observed higher transition rates among EQ participants than among youths in the control group. Moreover, a more recent evaluation by the Ministry for Employment and Social Affairs (BMAS, 2012) found that EQ yields higher transition rates into the formal dual system than other non-company based vocational preparation measures. The 2008 evaluation estimated an overall success rate of 40% in terms of outreach to the target group and successful transition (Becker, Grebe and Asmus, 2008). According to the 2012 evaluation (BMAS, 2012), the scheme is most beneficial to male persons

younger than 25 with an educational qualification (the higher the more likely the success), who have not dropped out of educational programmes in the past and who attend EQ for as long as possible (up to 12 months). This shows the EQ scheme has not yet sufficiently reached those who have not obtained a school leaving certificate.

Industry has been able to provide around 30 000 EQ places per year. Most of these places have been taken up, often successfully accommodating the students' interests with a suitable working environment which has led to an almost negligible drop-out rate (BMAS, 2012). Between 60 and 70% of the EQ trainees are taken over as regular apprentices by their training companies, those not taken over have to find an apprenticeship position elsewhere (Ausbildung.info, 2016; IHK Berlin, 2016). For example, BMW has offered 40 EQ placements per year since 2004, with 60% of the EQ trainees subsequently attending a regular apprenticeship with BMW (BMW, 2016).

According to the 2012 evaluation, two problems in the implementation concern the lack of systematic vocational school attendance by EQ participants and certification. Differing regulations at Länder level are the reason for no or no systematic school attendance. This is problematic as school attendance is often the decisive factor as to whether EQ is recognised and counted towards a subsequent apprenticeship. EQ is only of value to participants if they receive documentation for it. However, certification from both the training company and the relevant chamber is only provided for in one third of all cases (BMAS, 2012).

In addition to helping young people find an apprenticeship placement, EQ was also intended to encourage more firms to become training companies. Although most companies offering EQ placements are training companies already, the evaluation revealed that more than a third of those firms only providing EQ subsequently decide to become apprenticeship training companies themselves (BMAS, 2012).

Source: Ausbildung.info (2016), "Beliebte BvB", Ver.di Jugend, http://ausbildung.info/beliebte-bvb (accessed 13 June 2016); BA (Bundesagentur für Arbeit) (2015), "Brücke in die Berufsausbildung: Betriebliche Einstiegsqualifizierung (EQ)", Arbeitsagentur Nürnberg, https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/web/wcm/idc/groups/public/documents/webdatei/mdaw/mtm5/~edisp/l6019022dstbai382599.pdf (accessed 13 June 2016); BA (Bundesagentur für Arbeit) (2014), "Einstiegsqualifizierung (EQ)", https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/web/content/DE/dienststellen/rdnsb/hildesheim/Agentur/BuergerinnenundBuerger/Ausbildung/Detail/index.htm?dfContentId=L6019022DSTBAI640924 (accessed 12 May 2016); Becker, C., T. Grebe, and J. Asmus (2008), *Begleitforschung des Sonderprogramms des Bundes zur Einstiegsqualifizierung Jugendlicher – EQJ-Programm*, GIB (Gesellschaft für Innovationsforschung und Beratung), http://www.bmas.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/PDF-Publikationen/Forschungsberichte/eqj-abschlussbericht.pdf?__blob=publicationFile (accessed 12 May 2016); BMAS (2012), Weiterführung der Begleitforschung zur Einstiegsqualifizierung (EQ), Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales, http://www.bildungsketten.de/intern/system/upload/Materialien/eq_abschlussbericht_maerz_2012.pdf (accessed 13 June 2016); BMBF (n.d.), "Informationen zur Einstiegsqualifizierung Plus (EQ Plus)", Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, https://www.bmbf.de/files/arbeitspapier_einstiegsqualifizierung.pdf (accessed 13 June 2016); BMW (2016), "Junge Flüchtlinge beginnen Einstiegsqualifizierung bei der BMW Group", https://www.press.bmwgroup.com/deutschland/article/detail/T0251842DE/junge-fluechtlinge-beginnen-einstiegsqualifizierung-bei-der-bmw-group (accessed 12 May 2016); DIHK (2011), "Einstiegsqualifizierung mit IHK-Zertifikat: Brücken in Ausbildung bauen", http://www.ihk-praktikumsportal.de/blob/da_praktikumsportal/Downloads/3250426/895060f4318806dd03c43626538ce131/Detaillierte_Informationen_zur_Einstiegsqualifizierung_IHK_Orga-data.pdf (accessed 13 June 2016); European Commission (2013), *Apprenticeship and Traineeship Schemes in EU27: Key Success Factors. A Guidebook for Policy Planners and Practitioners*, http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/vocational-policy/doc/alliance/apprentice-trainee-success-factors_en.pdf, accessed 10 May 2016; Freie Berufe (2012), "Fragen und Antworten zur Einstiegsqualifizierung", http://www.freie-berufe.de/fileadmin/bfb/5_Themen/3_Berufliche-Bildung/5_Einstiegsqualifizierungen/FAQ_EQ_2013.pdf (accessed 12 May 2016); IHK Berlin (2016), "Einstiegsqualifizierung", https://www.ihk-berlin.de/produktmarken/ausbildung/wege-in-die-ausbildung/Einstiegsqualifizierung/2261846 (accessed 12 May 2016).

The transition system (Übergangssystem) in Germany

The transition system (*Übergangssystem*) in Germany refers to various educational offers which prepare young people who cannot find an apprenticeship placement and/or have not yet completed their compulsory schooling for transition into the vocational education and training (VET) system. It constitutes the third sector of Germany's VET system. Differently to the other two sectors, the dual system and the school-based VET system, it does not lead to a recognised VET qualification but enables participants to catch up on general education requirements and prepare for enrolment in a formal VET programme (Kühnlein, 2008).

It is a very heterogeneous sector including vocational preparation measures (*Berufsvorbereitende Massnahmen*, BvB)[2] that are funded by the Federal Employment Agency and have a legal basis in the Social Security Code. Examples of BvB are the preparatory school-based vocational year (*Berufsvorbereitungsjahr*, BVJ) to obtain initial vocational skills and complete compulsory education, the basic vocational year (*Berufsgrundbildungsjahr*, BGJ) that can count towards a three-year apprenticeship and the entry traineeships (*Einstiegsqualifizierung*, EQ) combining in-company training and vocational school courses (see separate description). Students do not receive a training allowance during their BVJ or BGJ but can apply for a training support grant (*Berufsausbildungsbeihilfe*) (Ausbildungspark, 2016c). Other transition offers include partly qualifying courses at vocational schools (Ausbildungspark, 2016b; Autorengruppe BIBB and Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2011).

In terms of scale, in 2014/2015 for instance, of all 2.5 million students attending vocational school 2% followed a preparatory school-based vocational year BVJ (i.e. about 53 000) and 1% a basic vocational year BGJ. Compared to the previous school year, this presents an 8% increase in BVJ students and a 4% increase in BGJ (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2015).

The preparatory school-based vocational year (Berufsvorbereitungsjahr, BVJ)

The preparatory vocational year (BVJ) is a one-year school-based vocational preparation of the Federal Employment Agency. It is offered in 10 of Germany's16 federal Länder[3], with similar offers also existing in the other six Länder called variously "*Vorqualifizierungssjahr Arbeit/Beruf*" (VAB), "*Berufseinstiegjahr"* (BEJ), "*berufsqualifizierender Lehrgang"* (BQL) (Ausbildung.info, 2016).

The BVJ is targeted at individuals under 18 who have completed compulsory schooling but without necessarily having obtained a lower secondary school leaving certificate. In particular, it addresses the needs of individuals with learning difficulties, learning disabilities or behavioural problems and socially disadvantaged youths. The two Länder Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania and Hamburg also offer a special BVJ for young people with a migration background (BA, 2016). The BVJ offers these young people the opportunity to fulfil their compulsory vocational school attendance, obtain a lower secondary education qualification and to discover up to three different occupational fields both in theory and practice (Ausbildungspark, 2016a).

The BVJ typically starts in September and lasts for 12 months, but can be shortened or prolonged to up to 18 months. BVJ participants attend a vocational school studying general subjects at lower secondary level, supplemented by practical work placements (which are not based on a work contract with). At the

[2] The Federal Employment Agency offers on its website planet-beruf.de information on BvB measures in the 16 Länder: http://planet-beruf.de/index.php?id=1305 and http://planet-beruf.de/eltern/mein-kind-unterstuetzen/stellensuche-bewerbung/weitere-beitraege-stellensuche-bewerbung/glossar-berufsvorbereitende-angebote/ (accessed 13 June 2016).

[3] Baden-Wuerttemberg, Bavaria, Hamburg, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Lower Saxony, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, Thuringia and Saarland.

end of the year, students sit a final exam in general education and vocational subjects. In order to obtain the lower secondary education qualification, students need to sit additional exams in German, maths and English. Attendance of the BVJ is free of charge, no training allowance is paid during the BVJ but students may qualify for the training support grant (*Berufsausbildungsbeihilfe*, BAB).

In order to apply for a BVJ, young people first have to find out which vocational school offers the professions they are interested in. Many schools provide information and an inscription form on their homepage. Students directly submit their application including their last school certificate, CV and motivation letter to the vocational school of their choice (Ausbildungspark, 2016a). BVJ offers close to where a young person lives can be found on the KURSNET portal provided by the Federal Employment Agency[4].

The basic vocational year (Berufsgrundbildungsjahr, BGJ)

The basic vocational year (BGJ) is a full- or part-time offer that conveys general education and skills specific to an occupation. It is offered in 8 of the 16 federal Länder[5] (BA, 2016). The BGJ is aimed at students with a lower secondary school leaving certificate. Interested students apply directly at the relevant vocational school offering BGJ, with an application procedure similar to the one for the BVJ and a list of BGJ offers available on the KURSNET portal of the Federal Employment Agency[6] (BA, 2016).

The BGJ curriculum follows the framework curriculum of the relevant occupation and includes obligatory work placements. There are two different forms of BGJ: In the full-time school-based BGJ, participants attend vocational school during the week, focusing on occupation-specific theory but also on general subjects such as German and English, and participate in traineeships of several weeks. The dual BGJ resembles the dual apprenticeship scheme, students attend vocational school during two days per week and spend the remaining three days at a training company. Successful attendance can be counted towards a subsequent apprenticeship, sometimes it is recognised as an equivalent of the first apprenticeship year (BA, 2016).

Evaluation of Germany's transition system

The share of students who enrolled in the transition system increased between 1995 and 2005 from 32% to 41% of all new VET and has since decreased to 25% (around a quarter million students). Most participants come from lower secondary school (*Hauptschule)*, both with and without a lower secondary school leaving qualification (*Hauptschulabschluss*) (DIPF, 2016).

A 2006 evaluation (Beicht, Friedrich and Ulrich, 2008) of the effectiveness of the transition system showed that the transition system can both improve chances to obtain a training position but also lead to a "waiting loop" of transitional educational measures. The study found that shortly upon completion of their transitional education measure, nearly half of all participants obtained an apprenticeship position, almost a quarter enrolled in school-based VET programmes, and about a third did not find a formal VET placement or dropped out during the following two years.

[4] http://kursnet-finden.arbeitsagentur.de/kurs/?target=expert&edugroup=A&immediate=true&edugoal=Berufsvorbereitungsjahr

[5] Bavaria, Bremen, Hesse, Hamburg, North Rhine-Westphalia, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, Schleswig-Holstein and Saarland.

[6] http://kursnet-finden.arbeitsagentur.de/kurs/?target=expert&edugroup=A&immediate=true&edugoal=Berufsgrundbildungsjahr

A 2011 survey by the Federal Institute for VET (Autorengruppe BIBB and Bertelsmann Stiftung) found that 89% of 482 surveyed VET experts from training companies, supra-company training centres, schools, chambers, employer associations trade unions, universities, public administration and professional associations consider the financial and staffing investment in the transition system inefficient and more than 75% criticised the diversity and lack of clarity of the transition system. Despite these criticisms more than 80% viewed the transition system as indispensable. Among the proposed changes, experts most often demanded improvements in student profiling, support in the search of an apprenticeship position and an expansion of the in-company component of transitional education measures. The same 2011 survey (Autorengruppe BIBB and Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2011) also asked 316 young people (of whom almost 40% attended the transition system themselves) about 18 suggestions to improve the transition system. In contrast to the experts' opinion, most young people were not in favour of a reduction of the transition measures to a couple of basic measures. This shows that the diversity of measures is considered beneficial by those making use of them but burdensome by those providing these numerous and varying measures.

Given shrinking age cohorts, the transition system could become less important. On the other hand, the offer of apprenticeship positions will continue to vary across regions and companies are unlikely to lower their skill requirements so as to allow all low-skilled school leavers to start vocational training. As a result, the transition system will likely remain in place (Autorengruppe BIBB and Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2011). For young people who, at general education schools, did not acquire the skills needed for a VET programme, the transition system is indispensable, in particular the basic vocational year (BGJ). The partly qualifying courses at vocational schools provide an interesting option for those young people who, after completion of general education, aim for a higher educational school leaving certificate. However, if a young person already possess all the skills required for an apprenticeship, the transition system should be avoided (Beicht, 2010).

Source: Ausbildung.info (2016), "Berufsvorbereitende Maßnahmen", Ver.di Jugend, http://ausbildung.info/berufsvorbereitende-bildungsmassnahmen (accessed 13 June 2016); Ausbildungspark (2016a), "Das ABC der Ausbildung: Berufsvorbereitungsjahr (BVJ)", Ausbildungspark Verlag, Offenbach, http://www.ausbildungspark.com/ausbildungs-abc/berufsvorbereitungsjahr-ausbildung-bvj/ (accessed 13 June 2016); Ausbildungspark (2016b), "Das ABC der Ausbildung: Berufsvorbereitende Bildungsmaßnahme (BvB)", Ausbildungspark Verlag, Offenbach, http://www.ausbildungspark.com/ausbildungs-abc/berufsvorbereitende-bildungsmassnahme-ausbildung-bvb/ (accessed 13 June 2016); Ausbildungspark (2016c), "Das ABC der Ausbildung: Berufsgrundbildungsjahr (BGJ)", Ausbildungspark Verlag, Offenbach, http://www.ausbildungspark.com/ausbildungs-abc/berufsgrundbildungsjahr-ausbildung-bgj/ (accessed 13 June 2016); Autorengruppe BIBB and Bertelsmann Stiftung (2011), "Reform des Übergangs von der Schule in die Berufsausbildung. Aktuelle Vorschläge im Urteil von Berufsbildungsexperten und Jugendlichen", *BIBB Wissenschaftliche Diskussionspapier* https://www.bibb.de/veroeffentlichungen/de/publication/show/id/6613 (accessed 17 May 2016). Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung (2014), "Berufliche Ausbildung", *Bildungsbericht 2014*, W. Bertelsmann Verlag, Bielefeld, http://www.bildungsbericht.de/daten2014/e_web2014.pdf (accessed 17 May 2016); BA (2016), "Worum es bei EQ & Co. geht", Bundesagentur für Arbeit, http://planet-beruf.de/eltern/mein-kind-unterstuetzen/stellensuche-bewerbung/weitere-beitraege-stellensuche-bewerbung/glossar-berufsvorbereitende-angebote/ (accessed 14 June 2016); Beicht, U. (2010), "Bedeutung und Wirksamkeit von Bildungsgängen des Übergangssystems", in *Datenreport zum Berufsbildungsbericht*, https://datenreport.bibb.de/html/1229.htm (accessed 13 May 2016); Beicht, U., M. Friedrich, J. G. Ulrich (eds.) (2008), *Ausbildungschancen und Verbleib von Schulabsolventen*, BIBB, Bertelsmann Verlag, Bielefeld; DIPF (German Institute for International Educational Research) (2016), "Bildungsbericht 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014", http://www.bildungsbericht.de/zeigen.html?seite=4283 (accessed 17 May 2016); Kühnlein, G. (2008), "Das beruflich Übergangssystem: Neues kommunales Handlungsfeld im Dreieck Arbeitsmarkt-, Bildungs- und Jugendpolitik", BWP (Berufsbildung in Wissenschaft und Praxis), https://www.bibb.de/veroeffentlichungen/de/bwp/show/id/1323 (accessed 17 May 2016); Klemm, K. (2012), *Was kostet eine Ausbildungsgarantie in Deutschland?*, Bertelsmann Stiftung, Gütersloh, http://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/fileadmin/files/BSt/Publikationen/GrauePublikationen/GP_Was_kostet_eine_Ausbildungsgarantie_in_Deutschland.pdf (accessed 17 May 2016); Statistisches Bundesamt (2015), *Berufliche Schulen: Schuljahr 2014/2015*, DeStatis, Fachserie 11, Reihe 2, Wiesbaden,

https://www.destatis.de/DE/Publikationen/Thematisch/BildungForschungKultur/Schulen/BeruflicheSchulen2110200157004.pdf?__blob=publicationFile (accessed 14 June 2016); Werner, D., M. Neumann, J. Schmidt (2008), *Volkswirtschaftliche Potenziale am Übergang von der Schule in die Arbeitswelt*, http://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/fileadmin/files/BSt/Publikationen/GrauePublikationen/VolkswirtschaftlichePotenziale_Gesamtbericht_Kurzfassung.pdf, Bertelsmann Stiftung, Gütersloh (accessed 17 May 2016).

Integrative VET (Integrative Berufsausbildung, IBA) in Austria

Integrative VET (*Integrative Berufsausbildung*, IBA) was introduced in 2003 to allow disadvantaged youths to extend their apprenticeship by one year (in exceptional cases by two years) (§ 8b.1 Vocational Training Act) or acquire partial qualification in one or several apprenticeship trades in one to three years (§ 8b.2 Vocational Training Act). Target groups include disabled persons, persons with special needs and persons without or with an insufficient basic school leaving certificate (BMBWFW, 2016).

Training assistance

The training assistance is at the centre of the IBA initiative as it has both a coordinating and support function. Most training assistants have a special education background and come from organisations for disadvantaged youths. When IBA takes place at a training company, in the first support phase, training assistants are in charge of administrative tasks, define the content of the training contract between the apprentice and the training company, prepare/sensitise the company employees for the arrival of the apprentice and find a person of trust, and register the apprentice at the vocational school. Subsequently, training assistants act as mediators, provide tutorial support and design the final exam for the partial qualification pathway. When IBA takes place at a supra-company training centre, training assistance is provided by the centre's social workers and is less demanding because the liaison work with training companies is not necessary (Heckl et al., 2008).

Characteristics of IBA apprentices

Since IBA was introduced in 2003, the number of participants has continuously increased, from ca 1 000 to 6 500 in 2014 (6% of all apprentices in 2014) (Dornmayer, 2012; Sozialministerium, 2016). More than two-thirds of all participants use the option to extend the apprenticeship duration and only one third opts for the partial qualification pathway (Dornmayer, 2012). Of all participants, more than two-thirds are trained in training companies and one third in supra-company training centres. Most popular apprenticeship trades are retail salespersons, cook, carpenter and hairdresser (Heckl et al., 2008). 60% of all participants are male. The average age of 17 years is slightly higher than in regular apprenticeships. Two-thirds of IBA apprentices attended special needs education prior to joining IBA (Heckl et al., 2008). Most IBA apprentices have learning disabilities and attend private extra lessons to succeed in the vocational school courses.

Implementation of IBA in training companies and supra-company training centres

Most training companies are SMEs, had trained apprentices before offering IBA apprenticeships and have previous experience with the integration of disabled persons. Most IBA apprenticeship placements are created on the initiative of training assistants and personal requests by future apprentices or their parents. A 2008 survey found that more than 80% of the training companies were satisfied with the IBA programme and in more than 20% of surveyed companies IBA had even increased the social engagement of employees (Heckl et al., 2008).

There are different supra-company training providers. Some train IBA apprentices in their own workshops, some are themselves integrative companies, and others only recruit IBA apprentices to send

them subsequently to host companies. As many supra-company centres focus on specific target groups, young people usually attend an orientation course before the start of their IBA programme to determine which supra-company centre best fits their needs.

Training companies obtain a monthly allowance in addition to the regular per-apprentice funding. IBA in supra-company centres is mainly funded by the Public Employment Service (AMS), the Federal Social Office and the respective federal state (Heckl et al., 2008).

Implementation of IBA in VET schools

IBA apprentices are typically integrated in the regular classes at VET schools. For those in the partial qualification pathway, individual curricula and learning objectives are defined and not more than five of these apprentices attend a regular class together.

Integrating IBA apprentices in regular classes at VET schools is a demanding task for VET teachers. To help them, further and continuous education courses have been designed, additional supportive staff has been trained, the student number per class was reduced and extra tutorials are offered (Heckl et al., 2008).

Financial resources of the school-based part of the apprenticeship training are covered by the provinces and 50% of the costs for the teaching staff are subsidised by the federal government (European Commission, 2013).

Evaluation of IBA

According to a 2012 evaluation (Dornmayer, 2012), IBA facilitates the transition into the labour market. The employment rate of IBA one month and four years after programme completion is 50% and 60% among IBA graduates compared to only 8% and 44% among programme drop-outs.

Drop-out rates are lower among apprentices in training companies than in supra-company centres, reaching ca. 50% in extended apprenticeships and 36% in the partial qualification option, with the latter rate lower because of shorter programme duration. While these drop-out rates might seem high, many young people (25% of all those dropping out) actually drop out from IBA to enrol in a regular apprenticeship.

Labour market outcomes are also better for those attending IBA in companies (76% employed one month after completion) than for those in supra-company training centres (20% employed). While it is difficult to pinpoint the reasons for these different employment outcomes (e.g. different entrance requirements), the difference suggests that IBA in training companies is more effective in supporting the transition into work than training in supra-company centres.

Source: BMWFW (Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy) (2016), "Lehrausbildung in verlängerter Lehrzeit und in Teilqualifikation", http://www.bmwfw.gv.at/Berufsausbildung/LehrlingsUndBerufsausbildung/Seiten/IntegrativeBerufsausbildung(IBA).aspx (accessed 11 May 2016); Dornmayr, H. (2012), Berufseinmündung von AbsolventInnen der Integrativen Berufsausbildung: Eine Analyse der Beschäftigungsverläufe, Ibw-Forschungsbericht, No. 167, Institut für Bildungsforschung der Wirtschaft, Wien, http://www.bmwfw.gv.at/Berufsausbildung/LehrlingsUndBerufsausbildung/Documents/659Endbericht_IBA-Berufseinmündung_neu.pdf (accessed 11 May 2016); European Commission (2013), *Apprenticeship and Traineeship Schemes in EU27: Key Success Factors. A Guidebook for Policy Planners and Practitioners*, http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/vocational-policy/doc/alliance/apprentice-trainee-success-factors_en.pdf, accessed 10 May 2016; Heckl, E. et al. (2008), *Evaluierung der integrativen Berufsausbildung (IBA): Endbericht*, Austrian Institute for SME Research, http://www.bmwfw.gv.at/Berufsausbildung/LehrlingsUndBerufsausbildung/Documents/Endbericht_IBA.pdf

(accessed 12 May 2016); Sozialministerium (Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales und Konsumentenschutz) (2016), Jugend und Arbeit in Österreich: Berichtsjahr 2014/2015, https://www.sozialministerium.at/cms/site/attachments/1/0/6/CH2124/CMS1402033052188/jugend_und_arbeit_in_oesterreich_berichtsjahr_2014_2015_webversion.pdf (accessed 11 May);

Supra-company apprenticeships (Überbetriebliche Ausbildung, ÜBA) in Austria

Austria's supra-company apprenticeships (*Überbetriebliche Ausbildung*, ÜBA) allow young people who are unable to find a regular apprenticeship placement to complete an alternative full apprenticeship in accredited "supra-company" training centres. ÜBA is part of the 2008 training guarantee that was created by Austria's federal government and the social partners as a 'safety net' for young people up to the age of 18 (Eurofund, 2012).

ÜBA follows the same principles as a traditional apprenticeship combining practical training and classroom learning. But it is typically preceded and accompanied by additional personal guidance, including socio-pedagogical counselling, learning support and assistance with job search. This enables disadvantaged young people to make better informed career choices and select a realistic pathway for their future (Sweet, 2014).

There are two forms of ÜBA offered in 100 different trades. ÜBA 1 allows young people to participate in an apprenticeship programme delivered almost exclusively by an accredited supra-company training provider, with practical workshops that simulate an in-company environment or short in-company internships. ÜBA 2 places greater emphasis on practical work experience in a company. Training in a company is based on a short-term apprenticeship training contracts and is combined with theoretical courses at an accredited training centre (European Commission, 2013; Hofbauer, Kugi-Mazza and Sinowatz, 2014). If trainees are not able to transfer to a regular apprenticeship, they can complete a supra-company apprenticeship in three to four years by successfully passing the final apprenticeship exam (Eurofund, 2012).

Since the start of the ÜBA provision in 2008, there have been on average 9 500 participants per year (ca. 8% of all apprentices in 2014), of which 60% quit in the course of the year, either to enter a traditional apprenticeship (24%), start a job (10%) or become unemployed/inactive/participate in a further education measure (26%) (Hofbauer, Kugi-Mazza and Sinowatz, 2014; Sozialministerium 2016).

Students receive an apprenticeship salary from the government of EUR 309 per month during the first and second year and EUR 714 per month during the third and fourth year (AMS, 2016). Total annual costs per participant range between EUR 14 000 and16 000 and public funding per annum for ÜBA amounts to EUR 149 million (European Commission, 2013; Lenger, Löffler, Dornmayr, 2010). Model calculations for 2014 to 2024 demonstrate that the costs of ÜBA are covered by the fiscal returns of graduates five to seven years after successful completion (Hofbauer, Kugi-Mazza and Sinowatz, 2014). No studies have so far calculated the costs that would occur if young people did not attend ÜBA and ended up unemployed. However, longitudinal panel studies in other countries, such as Denmark, suggest severe socio-economic consequences of long-term youth unemployment both for the individuals concerned and the state budget (OFCE, ECLM, IMK, 2012 cited in Hofbauer, Kugi-Mazza and Sinowatz, 2014).

Source: AMS (Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich, 2016), "Überbetriebliche Lehrausbildung", http://www.ams.at/service-arbeitsuchende/finanzielles/foerderungen/ueberbetriebliche-lehrausbildung (accessed 11 May, 2016); Eurofound (2012), *NEETs- Young people not in employment, education or training: Characteristics, costs and policy responses in Europe*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_publication/field_ef_document/ef1254en.pdf (10 May 2016); European Commission (2013), *Apprenticeship and Traineeship Schemes in EU27: Key Success Factors. A Guidebook*

for Policy Planners and Practitioners, http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/vocational-policy/doc/alliance/apprentice-trainee-success-factors_en.pdf, accessed 10 May 2016; Hofbauer, S., E. Kugi-Mazza, L. Sinowatz (2014), "Erfolgsmodell ÜBA: Eine Analyse der Effekte von Investitionen in die überbetriebliche Ausbildung ÜBA auf Arbeitsmarkt und öffentliche Haushalte", Institut für Sozia- und Wirtschaftswissenschaften (WISO), Linz, http://www.isw-linz.at/themen/dbdocs/LF_Hofbauer_Kugi_Sinowatz_03_14.pdf (accessed 11 May 2016); Lenger, B., R. Löffler, H. Dornmayr (2010), *Jugendliche in der überbetrieblichen Berufsausbildung: Eine begleitende Evaluierung. Endbericht*, Institut für Bildungsforschung der Wirtschaft and Österreichisches Institut für Berufsbildungsforschung, http://www.oeibf.at/db/calimero/tools/proxy.php?id=14394 (accessed 11 May 2016); OFCE, ECLM, IMK (2012), Independent Annual Growth Survey, First Report 2013. Failed Austerity in Europe: The Way Out, http://www.ofce.sciences-po.fr/pdf/revue/si2013/si2013.pdf (accessed 11 May 2016); Sweet, R. (2014), *Work-based learning: A Handbook for Policy Makers and Social Partners in ETF Partner Countries*, ETF, Turin, http://ec.europa.eu/education/library/publications/etf-wbl-handbook_en.pdf (accessed 10 May 2016); Sozialministerium (Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales und Konsumentenschutz) (2016), Jugend und Arbeit in Österreich: Berichtsjahr 2014/2015, https://www.sozialministerium.at/cms/site/attachments/1/0/6/CH2124/CMS1402033052188/jugend_und_arbeit_in_oesterreich_berichtsjahr_2014_2015_webversion.pdf (accessed 11 May).

Transition arrangements for youths at risk in Switzerland

In Switzerland, the offer of bridging measures (*Offres de formation transitoire*, *Brückenangebote*) in support of youths without upper-secondary education attainment at risk of dropping out of education and training programmes or becoming unemployed has multiplied over the past twenty years[7]. The originally voluntary offer by cantons has become more institutionalised and comprehensive, but is not regulated at federal level (Landert and Eberli, 2015; WBF, 2013). Three factors are considered to have been conducive to extensive stakeholder involvement in this field, including the economic significance of highly skilled workers, the individual benefit of completing a VET programme and the integrative capacity of VET, keeping youth unemployment at bay and integrating young people with a migration background (Landert and Eberli, 2015).

Today, around 170 responsible bodies (cantons, communities and municipal associations) provide over 16 000 places in bridging measures and ca. 3 000 places in so-called motivational semesters (SEMO, *semestres de motivation*, *Motivationssemester*, see also http://www.ch-semo.ch/), of which almost 90% are publicly funded. In 2012, more than 16 000 young adults attended fully or partly publicly funded bridging measures, which amounts to ca. 18% of all 16-year olds (which is the reference population as most participants are of that age) (Landert and Eberli, 2015).

The motivational semester (SEMO)

The motivational semester (SEMO) is a training and employment measure that aims at helping young people to enrol in a vocational programme. Since its introduction in 1994, it has been financed through the Swiss unemployment insurance system (ALV) and coordinated by the cantonal economic and labour offices. Unemployment insurance reimburses SEMO providers the implementation costs and pays SEMO participants a monthly training allowance of up to CHF 450 (Landert and Eberli, 2015). Compared to other employment measures (*arbeitsmarktliche Maßnahmen*, AMM), SEMO is relatively inexpensive, amounting to 10% of overall AMM spending (Praz, 2014).

[7] The backdrop and sustained support for this increase is the objective of the Swiss Conference of the Cantonal Directorate of Education (*Schweizerische Konferenz der kantonalen Erziehungsdirektionen*, EDK) to reach 95% of upper-secondary educational attainment among those aged 25 years by 2020 (EDK, 2006; WBF, 2013).

SEMO targets school leavers under the age of 25 who could not find an apprenticeship placement or dropped out of VET and are registered as unemployed (Landert and Eberli, 2015). Between 1994 and 2014 around 80 000 youth took part. On average, 20% of the participants dropout of SEMO, sometimes due to health problems or because the offer does not suit their needs (Praz, 2014).

The SEMO scheme officially lasts for six months but it is frequently extended to an overall duration of nine months. Students typically attend vocational school 1-2 days per week, with an average of 25% of overall programme time spent in school. As SEMO can be started at any point during the year, it offers flexibility to the participants but does not always align with the Swiss school year which starts mid-August each year (Landert and Eberli, 2015). In 2016, 75 SEMO programmes are offered across Switzerland (SEMO, 2016). Programme size ranges from 12 to 150 participants. In some programmes the young people work in internal workshops, in others they work alongside employees of the training company in a similar way to apprentices. Some programmes target specific groups such as the "*Autonauten*" programme for boys with a migration background that conveys skills in recycling and reparation of old cars in the canton of Aargau. Other programmes focus on a specific topic, such as the "*InTeam*" programme in Basle in which participants act as peer educators in HIV/AIDS prevention initiatives (Müller, 2007). As a rule, cantons coordinate their offers of SEMO and bridging measures so that after attendance of a SEMO students can continue into a bridging measure (Landert and Eberli, 2015).

Bridging measures

Bridging measures are defined as one-year programmes that are fully or partially funded by the cantons and communities, with or without practical components that prepare for transition into VET (both EFZ apprenticeships and EBA apprenticeships) or general education (both upper-secondary school (*Gymansium*) and specialised middle school (*Fachmittelschule*). On average, 44% of overall time is spent in school (Landert and Eberli, 2015). There are three basic profiles of bridging measures offered by the cantons, namely courses focusing on full-time courses, combined offers focusing on vocational orientation (*Kombi*) and integration courses.

Full-time school-based courses

Participants attend full-time classes at school, which are complemented with excursions and some small practical elements. This bridging measure often takes two forms, either 1) preparation for entry into general education or a three- to four-year apprenticeship leading to the Federal VET Diploma (*Eidgenössisches Fähigkeitszeugnis*, EFZ) or 2) preparation for the EFZ or the two-year basic VET (*Grundbildung mit Eidgenössischem Berufsattest*, EBA) programme through improvements in skills of the local language skills, maths and motivation and vocational career guidance (Landert and Eberli, 2015).

Combined offers focusing on vocational field orientation (*Kombi*)

Combined offers can take three different forms: 1) including a scheme of 3-4 work-based days and 1-2 school-based days. The distribution of time spent in the workplace and in school depends on the varying importance of the practical component, as some youths may already have a pre-traineeship contract (*Vorlehre*) with their training company (Vocational Act, Art. 7); or 2) a practical part that focusses on a specific occupation although participants do not have a training contract yet; or 3) an emphasis on vocational field orientation (Landert and Eberli, 2015).

Integration courses for migrants

Youths under the age of 18 can join their parents in Switzerland in the family reunion framework. Many of them have neither a formal school leaving certificate nor sufficient knowledge of the local language to directly enrol in a vocational or general education programme. Consequently, relevant bridging

measures have to perform several functions, such as teaching of the local language, basic literacy and numeracy skills, cultural integration and vocational preparation, which poses challenges to cantons. In some cantons, participants are required to know the basics of the local language (A2 level) before enrolling in integration classes. In other cantons, no language skills are required and the programme lasts for two years, of which the first serves the acquisition of the local language and integration in the Swiss day-to-day life and the second focuses on vocational preparation.

Funding arrangements remain unclear in some cantons. With a view to help cantons to establish a regular offer of integration classes, the Federal State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) co-finances some integration initiatives through lump sums earmarked for cantonal integration programmes (Lander and Eberli, 2015).

Funding of transition arrangements

Around 88% of the bridging measures and 85% of those offering SEMO are funded by public bodies such as cantons, municipalities or associations of municipalities. Annual average costs per participant vary between EUR 4 500 and EUR 25 000, with variations due to differences in student profiles, programme structures and extent of individualised accompaniment. Generally, measures including work-based elements are less expensive for the state than school-based and supervision-extensive measures such as SEMO (see Table). Financial contributions to tuition and learning material by participants or parents range between EUR 180 and EUR 2 300. The diversity of offered measures and the lack of a standardised cost calculation method make comparisons difficult (Landert and Eberli, 2015).

Table. Costs of bridging measures and SEMO (2012/13)

Measure	Costs (CHF)
Full-time school-based courses	18 000 – 23 000
Combined offers focusing on vocational orientation (*Kombi*)	5 000 – 10 000
Integration courses for migrants	23 000 – 28 000
SEMO	Ca. 24 000

Source: Landert, C., and D. Eberli (2015), *Solutions Transitoires au Moment de la Transition I – États des Lieux*, On behalf of SBFI (State Secretariat for Education Research and Innovation), Landert Brägger Partner, Zurich, http://www.sbfi.admin.ch/berufsbildung/01501/01503/index.html?lang=fr (accessed 19 May 2016).

Evaluation of transition arrangements

In a narrow sense, measures for youths at risk are considered successful if the participants subsequently enrol in an apprenticeship or a school-based general education programme. A 2015 overview study on behalf of Switzerland's State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (Landert and Eberli, 2015) found that transition rates from public or partly publicly funded bridging measures into basic VET[8], practical training for individuals with disabilities (*PrA nach INSOS*) and general education schools are between 50% and more than 80% depending on the cantons. Of those young people attending SEMO, often with learning difficulties and limited knowledge of the local language, around 46% succeed in finding a subsequent educational measure that suits their needs. In a broader sense, transition measures are successful if they lead to an interim measure (e.g. a traineeship, beginning of a therapy, language training) that will enable participants to transition into a basic VET or PrA programme in the foreseeable future.

[8] Basic VET includes both the three- and four year apprenticeships leading to the Federal VET Diploma (*Eidgenössisches Fähigkeitszeugnis*, EFZ) and the two-year apprenticeship leading to the Federal VET Certificate (*Eidgenössisches Berufsattest*, EBA).

These transition rates are around 85% for bridging measures and 58% for SEMO (Landert and Eberli, 2015).

Source: EDK (Schweizerische Konferenz der kantonalen Erziehungsdirektoren) (2006), *Leitlinien zur Optimierung der Nahtstelle obligatorische Schule – Sekundarstufe II*, EDK, Bern, http://www.sz.ch/documents/edk_leitlinien_nahtstelle.pdf (accessed 20 May 2016); Landert, C., and D. Eberli (2015), *Solutions Transitoires au Moment de la Transition I – États des Lieux*, On behalf of SBFI (State Secretariat for Education Research and Innovation), Landert Brägger Partner, Zurich, http://www.sbfi.admin.ch/berufsbildung/01501/01503/index.html?lang=fr (accessed 19 May 2016); Müller, B. (2007), *Motivationssemester – ein Angebot für Jugendliche im Übergang in Berufsbildung und Arbeitsmarkt*, Fachhochschule Nordwestschweiz, Institut Kinder- und Jugendhilfe, Basel; Praz, G. (2014), "Pro investierten Franken sparen wir zehn Franken an Folgekosten", *Panorama: Fachinformationen für Berufsbildung, Berufsberatung und Arbeitsmarkt*, http://panorama.ch/dyn/1129.aspx?id_article=466 (accessed 17 June 2016); SEMO (2016), "Les semestres de motivation", http://www.ch-semo.ch/ (accessed 19 May 2016); WBF (Eidgenössisches Department für Wirtschaft, Bildung und Forschung) (2013), *Gezielte Förderung und Unterstützung von Jugendlichen mit unterschiedlichen Begabungspotenzialen an der Nahtstelle I und in der Berufsbildung*, Bericht des Bundesrates, Eidgenössisches Department für Wirtschaft, Bildung und Forschung.

Two-year apprenticeships (EBA) in Switzerland

The two-year apprenticeships (*Grundbildung mit Eidgenössischem Berufsattest*, EBA) programme in Switzerland offer young people the opportunity to acquire a basic vocational qualification (the Federal Vocational Certificate, *Eidgenössisches Berufsattest*, EBA) that is of labour market value and on which they can build to complete a three- to four-year apprenticeship that leads to the Federal VET Diploma (*Eidgenössisches Fähigkeitszeugnis*, EFZ) (Stern et al., 2010). The provision is aimed at practically oriented people of at least 15 years of age who have completed mandatory schooling and who struggle to find an apprenticeship placement or are at risk of dropping out of an apprenticeship (SBFI, 2014). As part of Switzerland's VET system, EBA was introduced by the federal government in 2004 to gradually replace the former basic apprenticeship (*Anlehre*) with a nation-wide homogenous, slightly more demanding basic vocational qualification and to improve the transition into the labour market of youths at risk (SBFI, 2014; WBF, 2013).

EBA provision and take-up

EBA is provided in around 60 occupations including popular ones such as healthcare assistant, gardener and hairdresser (Berufsberatung, 2016; WBF, 2013). In 2014, the most popular occupation was retail sale assistant, representing 20% of all EBA completions that year (*Detailassistent/in*) (for details on the EBA programme, see http://www.berufsbildung.ch/dyn/bin/5238-9789-1-detailhandelsassistent.pdf) (SBFI, 2016). Since the introduction of EBA in 2004 the number of new EBA apprenticeship contracts has increased, with ca. 4 500 in 2009 and 6 500 in 2015 (Bundesamt für Statistik, 2016; Stern et al., 2010). Between 2005 and 2014 around 30 000 students completed EBA (SBFI, 2016).

An evaluation (SBFI, 2016) found that only two-thirds of 1400 surveyed EBA graduates had started their EBA programme directly after having completed obligatory schooling, compared to almost 70% of direct entries into the EFZ apprenticeship. A third of EBA graduates had attended tenth grade, a general professional preparation programme or another form of bridging measure before enrolling in an EBA programme. Around two thirds of EBA graduates are under 20, compared to only a third of EFZ graduates who are younger than 20 (which does not come as a surprise as the EFZ apprenticeship takes longer). Between 2005 and 2014 approximately as many women as men completed an EBA programme (compared to 56% male EFZ graduates during the same period), although there are marked differences between occupations, with for instance mainly women completing the EBA retail sales assistant programme (SBFI, 2016). The share of EBA graduates with a migration background is 36% which is high compared to EFZ

(11% in 4-year EFZ and 16% in 3-year EFZ). 29% of parents of EBA graduates only have lower secondary education attainment which is again high compared to around 13% of parents of EFZ graduates (SBFI, 2016).

The structure of EBA programmes

The organisations of the world of work determine in which occupations EBA programmes are offered and create occupational profiles, contributing to the labour market relevance of the EBA provision. The federal government and the cantons ensure the quality of the provision.

Just as the three- and four-year apprenticeships, EBA takes place at three different places of learning including the training company, the vocational school and supra-company learning centres. The learning objectives, programme content and distribution of time spent at the different learning places are regulated by occupation-specific ordinances and curricula (SBFI, 2014; SDBB, 2015). For instance according to the curricula for EBA ICT assistants (ICT Berufsbildung Schweiz, 2010), co-operation and continuous adjustments between the three places of learning are indispensable for leaning success and are organised by the organisations of the world of work (including the chambers, trade unions and employer associations). Different performance objectives are stipulated for each learning place, and in case of overlaps, the emphasis would be on theory at the vocational school, on application at the training company, and on linking newly acquired skills to other work-based tasks at the supra-company learning centre.

The training curricula leaves room to accommodate the learning needs of EBA students. Typically one day per week is spent in school, with the optimal class size considered to be 12 EBA students. The school-based course coveys basic skills and basic knowledge in the chosen occupation and is linked to the content at the training company and supra-company training (SBFI, 2014).

The methods used in the final skills assessment can be adjusted to the specificities of the given occupation, with the practical components weighing more than the school-based elements (SBFI, 2014). Upon successful completion of an EBA programme students receive a Federal Vocational Certificate (*Eidgenössisches Berufsattest*, EBA). Individuals who fail in the skills assessment or who drop out from a three- or four-year apprenticeship can obtain a proof of competence (*Kompetenznachweis*) which describes their acquired skills and can help them in job applications.

The permeability to the three- and four-year EFZ apprenticeships is regulated by ordinances to ensure that in a given occupation, the EBA programme is compatible with the related EFZ apprenticeship (BBT, 2005). Typically, a student holding an EBA certification can get exemption from the first year of the related EFZ apprenticeship and 120 general education lessons attended during the EBA programme are counted towards the Federal VET Diploma (SBFI, 2014).

Special support for EBA students

To encourage the participation of as many young people at risk as possible, the programme duration can be shortened or extended and remedial courses, individual coaching and mentoring (*Fachkundige individuelle Begleitung*, FiB) and VET Case Management (*Case Management Berufsbildung*, CM BB) are provided, financed both by the cantons and private organisations (OECD, 2016; SBFI, 2014). Cantons inform training companies about the available extra support for EBA participants and further education measures for training supervisors (SBFI, 2014). Vocational schools offer remedial and optional classes that EBA students can attend (SDBB, 2015).

Individual coaching and mentoring (Fachkundige individuelle Begleitung, FiB)

Individual coaching and mentoring (*Fachkundige individuelle Begleitung*, FiB) has a national legal basis and its funding is secured in the long-term by the Confederation. Cantons are in charge of the arrangements for FiB (Häferli, Hofmann and Studer, 2012; WBF, 2013). Mentors supporting EBA students work according to national guidelines (see BBT, 2007) and, for instance in the canton of Zurich, they have to undergo a 300-hour further education course and attend recurrent team-coaching sessions (Kanton Zürich, 2016). They work across occupations and different places of learning with the aim to help young people improve their occupational and social skills and optimise their CV. Most FiB mentors are (former) teachers (at vocational schools), learning and speech therapists, teachers of students with special needs and social education workers (Häferli, Hofmann and Studer, 2012). Around half of all EBA participants benefit from the FiB provision, mainly thanks to their teachers' encouragement to make use of this extra support structure (SBFI, 2014; WBF, 2013).

Most EBA students in the FiB mentoring scheme are men of an average age of 20. Their starting positions vary, around a third has an insufficient command of the German language, another third lacks skills to organise work and learning, and the remaining students have psychological problems (Häferli, Hofmann and Studer, 2012). Evaluations (e.g. Häferli, Hofmann and Studer) find that the coaching and mentoring is most often started during the second year of EBA and focuses on difficulties at school rather than on personal or in-company aspects. While the scheme is considered successful, the authors recommend beginning with the mentoring already during the first year so that it can contribute more to the final exam preparation and to increase the involvement of the training companies in the FiB scheme (Häferli, Hofmann and Studer).

VET Case Management (Case Management Berufsbildung, CM BB)

VET Case Management (*Case Management Berufsbildung*, CM BB) is used when a student's multiple problems at school, the training place and other areas of life require the coordination of a larger support network than just remedial courses at school and FiB (BIZ, 2015; Häferli, Hofmann and Studer, 2012). CM BB is a structured process during which a case manager discusses with the respective young person and his/her parents his/her current personal situation and coordinates activities in accordance with a jointly established set of objectives that may encompass finding an apprenticeship position, successful completion and transition into employment. Activities to reach the objectives may include attendance of a one- to two-day trial apprenticeship (*Schnupperlehre*), a motivational semester (see separate description) or a traineeship (BIZ, 2016, WBF, 2013). CM BB was introduced in 2006 after FiB and, contrary to the latter, it is not limited to EBA or upper-secondary education but can already start at lower secondary level (i.e. 7th grade). It has no national legal basis and its funding (apart from some federal start-up financing) is in the hands of the cantons. In the absence of nation-wide rules on how CM BB and FiB mentoring should be coordinated, cantonal arrangements vary. In smaller cantons the same persons can be responsible for both FiB and CM BB, while in others two different departments are in charge (Häferli, Hofmann and Studer, 2012).

An evaluation (BIZ, 2015) found that at the moment of enrolment in the CM BB scheme 43% of all participants were shortly before or after finishing obligatory schooling, 39% were neither in employment, education or training, 12% attended VET or had dropped out of VET, and 6% were working or doing something else. Participation in CM BB had helped nearly half of all participants to enrol in upper-secondary VET within two years and almost 20% to find a place in the transition system (BIZ, 2015). Of the 304 surveyed CM BB participants 45% stated that their education and training situation had improved thanks to the scheme and 90% were satisfied with the CM BB provision. 80% of the surveyed staff in 25 cantonal offices observed improvements in how participants found apprenticeship positions, dealt with problems and thought of their own competences. The surveyed staff also believed that the overall life

situation of 25% participants had improved. The evaluation also notes structural improvements in the cantons. According to an in-depth analysis of 15 cantons, thanks to the CM BB scheme attention to youths-at-risk has increased, coordination between relevant student support bodies has improved and 12 of the 15 cantons have decided to make of CM BB a regular offer (BIZ, 2015).

Evaluation of EBA provision

In a 2010 evaluation of EBA (Stern et al., 2010) all relevant stakeholders, namely training companies, vocational schools, supranational training centres, EBA graduates and cantons, commented positively on the provision. The intended target group of young people who struggle to find an apprenticeship position because of weak school performance was reached. Overall, those completing basic VET were found to be better qualified and more highly skilled than before the introduction of EBA, i.e. compared to those who did the former basic apprenticeship (*Anlehre*) (Stern et al., 2010).

According to the most recent evaluation (SBFI, 2016), about 41% of EBA graduates continue into an EFZ apprenticeship in the two years following graduation and the majority of them can successfully complete the EFZ programme, only 8% drop out. Around 4% of EBA students already change to an EFZ programme during their first year of EBA. EBA also offers those dropping out from the EFZ apprenticeship the opportunity to acquire an upper-secondary vocational qualification, with around 15% of EBA learners being previous EFZ apprentices.

Of the 45% of EBA graduates that do neither continue into EFZ or other further education, 75% find employment within six months following programme completion, compared to 83% of EFZ graduates. The more difficult transition into work for EBA graduates can partly be explained by the fact that only a third is taken over by the training company compared to around half of all EFZ graduate (SBFI, 2016).

Analyses by the Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (Fuhrer and Schweri, 2010) show that the two-year EBA apprenticeships also yield positive returns to training companies – although to varying degrees across occupations. In more than half of 400 surveyed training companies, the productive contributions by the apprentices were higher than the net training costs and this already during the apprenticeship period. Over time more training companies are expected to break even, since introducing new training schemes such as EBA create initial additional costs which are likely to disappear in the medium to long term (Fuhrer and Schweri, 2010).

Source: Berufsberatung (2016), "EBA-Beruf – 2-jährige Lehre", SDBB (Schweizerisches Dienstleistungszentrum Berufsbildung), https://www.berufsberatung.ch/Dyn/Show/2101# (accessed 8 June 2016); BBT (Bundesamt für Berufsbildung und Technologie) (2007), *Leitfaden: Individuell Begleiter von Lernenden in der Beruflichen Grundbildung*, Bundesamt für Berufsbildung und Technologie http://www.sbfi.admin.ch/berufsbildung/01587/01595/01597/index.html?lang=de (accessed 18 May 2016); BBT (Bundesamt für Berufsbildung und Technologie) (2005), *Zweijährige Berufliche Grundbildung mit Eidgenössischem Berufsattest: Leitfaden*, Bundesamt für Berufsbildung und Technologie http://www.mba.zh.ch/internet/bildungsdirektion/mba/de/berufslehre_abschlusspruefung/berufliche_grundbildungen/zweijaehrige_grundausbildung_eba/_jcr_content/contentPar/downloadlist/downloaditems/69_1352130724630.spooler.download.1351861502063.pdf/attest_leitfaden_bbt.pdf (accessed 18 May 2016); BIZ (Berufsberatungs- und Informationszentrum) (2016), "Case Management Berufsbildung", BIZ, Kanton Bern, http://www.biz.erz.be.ch/biz_erz/de/index/biz_start_wahl/biz_start_wahl/case_management_berufsbildung.html (accessed 9 June 2016); BIZ (2015), *Nationale Evaluation Case Management Berufsbildung: Schlussbericht*, Egger, Dreher & Partner AG, http://www.biz.erz.be.ch/biz_erz/de/index/biz_start_wahl/biz_start_wahl/case_management_berufsbildung/dokumente_cmbb.assetref/dam/documents/ERZ/MBA/de/berufsberatung/CMBB/Nationale%20Evaluation.pdf (accessed 9 June 2016); Bundesamt für Statistik (2016), "Sekundarstufe II: Allgemein- und Berufsbildung. Übersichtstabellen Abschlüsse 2015", http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/de/index/themen/15/04/00/blank/allgemein-_oder_berufsbildung.html (accessed 18 May 2016); Fuhrer, M. and J. Schweri (2010), *Kosten und Nutzen von*

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